



Center for the Advancement of Health

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The Center for the Advancement of Health supports the Department of Health and Human Services' disease-prevention and "healthy choices" initiatives as worthy. Also worthy is the peer-review process at the department's National Institutes of Health, which provides the means for scientists to investigate prevention and treatment methods to improve citizens' health.

To single out and zero out certain grants because they involve the study of sexual behavior would likely increase unhealthy choices and lead to the spread of disease. It would be unconscionable to ignore the fact 20,000 Americans die each year from AIDS and 15 million have some kind of sexually transmitted disease. Unwise and unhealthy sexual behavior occurs across all income, geographical and political lines, and NIH-sponsored research must go beyond studying "the birds and the bees."

Government-sponsored research over the past 50 years has produced a body of evidence on how diseases develop and spread -- and how they disappear when prevented and treated properly. Support for many of those discoveries came directly as a result of NIH-funded research, and taxpayers have made good use of what they paid for. All publicly funded research deserves public scrutiny. But the basis of the oversight should be scientific and evidence-based, not ideological.